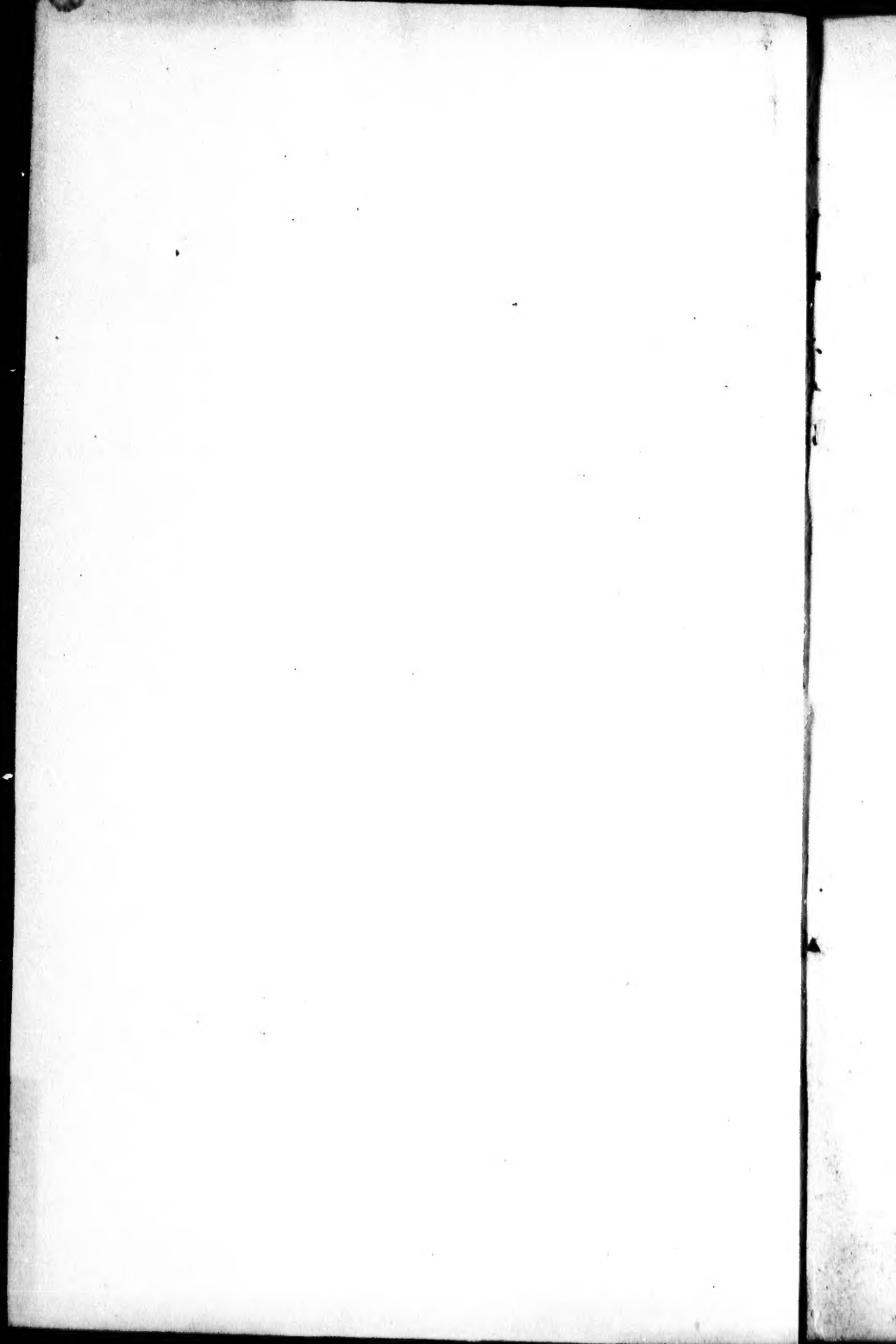
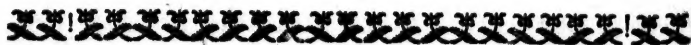


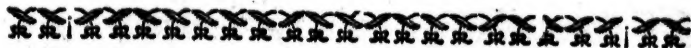




A

S E R M O N,

On the Day appointed for a GENERAL THANKS-
GIVING, 1759.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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GOD the Giver of VICTORY:

A

S E R M O N,

Preached at BIDEFORD, *Devon*,

On the 29th of *November*, 1759, being the Day
appointed for a GENERAL THANKSGIVING,
for the Success of his Majesty's Arms.

Published at the earnest Request of the Con-
gregation.

By SAMUEL LAVINGTON.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. BUCKLAND, at the Buck, in
Pater-Noster-Row; J. WARD, at the King's
Arms, in Cornhill; and A. TOZER, at Exeter.
MDCCLX.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

WEDNESDAY
MAY 19 1892

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P S A L M XLIV. 3.

For they got not the Land in Possession by their own Sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thy arm, and the light of thy Countenance, because thou hadst a Favour unto them.

BY the Royal Proclamation we are summoned this Day to the House of God; and private and publick Business is suspended for a Season, while a grateful Nation is *offering unto God thanksgiving, and paying its vows unto the Most High.* With what gratitude and chearfulness do we now assemble to celebrate the Lovingkindness of our God! Whereas, in Time past, we have met together with Sorrow and Humiliation, to deprecate the Divine Judgments, and to implore those Mercies from the Hand of

* Psal. i. 14.

B

God,

God, the Vouchsafement of which we are now joyfully and gratefully acknowledging. On former Occasions, when we were dispirited by a Series of Disappointments; when our Councils were divided and distracted; when our Expeditions and Enterprizes by Sea and Land were unsuccessful; when our Trade was declining, and our Enemies insulting, and our Hope as the giving up of the Ghost; with what gloom on our Countenances, with what heaviness and pain at our Hearts did we then assemble in the Sanctuary of God! With what Fervour and Importunity did we then wrestle at the Throne of Grace, for the Divine Blessing on a Land which appeared almost to be devoted to Destruction! With what Humility and Contrition did we then confess those crying Sins, which had exposed us to the severest Judgments; and how did we promise—Oh! how solemnly and repeatedly did we promise, that *if the Lord would turn again our Captivity* *, and deliver us out of the Hands of our Enemies, we would serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Lives †; and that the Blessing of a Nation ready to perish should come upon him ‡! This

* Psal. cxxvi. 4.
xxix. 13.

† Luke, i. 74, 75.

‡ Job,

memorable Year has afforded us many glorious Testimonies that the Lord *regardeth the Prayer of the destitute, and that he doth not despise their prayer* *. For he hath remembered the low Estate of his Servants, because his Mercy endureth for ever ; he hath redeemed us from our Enemies, because his Mercy endureth for ever ; and given their Land for an Heritage, for his Mercy endureth for ever ; even an Heritage to his Servant, our King, for his Mercy endureth for ever ; who giveth Food to all Flesh, for his Mercy endureth for ever † ; who causeth our Land to yield her increase §, and hath filled our Hearts with Food and Gladness ||. Praise ye the Lord, praise ye the Name of the Lord, praise him, O ye Servants of the Lord, ye that stand in the House of the Lord, in the Courts of the House of our God ; praise the Lord, for the Lord is good ; sing Praises unto his Name, for it is pleasant ; for we may hope the Lord hath chosen Britain to himself, and England for his peculiar Treasure *. Blessed be the Lord this Day out of Zion ; praise ye the Lord †.

I apprehend it will not be deemed unsuitable to the Occasion of this Day's Assembly :

* Psal. cii. 17. † Psal. cxxxvi. 21,—25. § Psal. lxxxv. 12. || Acts, xiv. 17. * Psal. cxxxv. 1,—4.
† Psal. cxxxv. 21.

It rather appears to me, to answer the special Design and Intention of the Royal Proclamation, that we *give Honour to whom Honour is due* † ; I mean, that while we cherish a grateful Remembrance of those who, under God, have been the chief Instruments of our Successes, we should not in the Excess of our Joy, and our gratitude to them, forget or neglect to acknowledge the over-ruling Providence of God, as the primary Cause of our Success, to adore him as the Giver and Dispenser of Victory, and as the absolute and uncontrouled Disposer of the Fates of Nations and Kingdoms.

The Penman of this Divine Composition is not certainly known ; however, the Beginning of it is a pious Recognition of the Divine Providence in subduing the Canaanites, and giving their Land to Israel for an Inheritance : And least this People, who were wont to think very highly of themselves and of their Ancestors, should mistake the Cause of their surprizing Successes to be their own Merit, or Power, or Valour ; he gives them to understand, that they were not primarily owing to the Conduct and Courage of their renowned

† Rom. xiii. 7.

General *Jofhua*, nor to the dauntless Intrepidity of those who fought under him; but to the favourable and efficacious Interposition of the Most High. Accordingly he declares in the Words of the Text; *They got not the Land in Possession by their own Sword, neither did their own arm save them, but thy Right Hand and thy arm and the Light of thy Countenance; because thou hast a Favour unto them.* I am persuaded you have already anticipated me in the Application of these Words to the glorious Train of Success and Victory over our Enemies, and to the Conquests and Acquisitions with which we have been favoured, and which we are called this Day to commemorate. SENEGAL, GOREE, GUADELUPE, LOUISBOURG, and especially QUEBEC, (in which Conquest, in a manner, all NORTH AMERICA is comprised,) are Acquisitions so valuable and important, that we cannot be deemed Friends to our Country, if our Hearts do not feel an inward Pleasure and Exultation; and I flatter myself I shall not be charged with designing or attempting to damp or diminish the publick Joy, or to cast the least Reflection on those gallant Men who were employed in those glorious Expeditions, if I say, that *They got not the Land in Possession by their own Sword,*
neither

neither did their own arm save them, but thy Right Hand and thine arm and the Light of thy Countenance, because thou hadst a Favour unto them.

In discoursing on these Words, I shall endeavour to shew,

I. In what Sense, and on what Accounts it is our Duty to ascribe our Victories to *the Divine Interposition*.

II. How the Divine Wisdom, Power, and Mercy are peculiarly and signally displayed *herein*.

I. I am to shew, in what Sense, and on what Accounts, it is our Duty to ascribe our Victories to the Lord. I answer,

1. This is not intended to lessen or obscure the Merits of Men, *as Instruments in the Divine Hand*.

God himself is pleased to put an Honour on those who signalize themselves in a good Cause, in Defence of their Liberty, their Religion, and their Country. And accordingly when God had determined, in a miraculous Manner, to destroy the Midianites by the Hand of Gideon, the chosen Band which Gideon led to the Attack, were commanded to cry, "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon *."

* Judg. vii. 18.

For though God will not suffer his Glory as the principal Agent, to be usurped by or transferred to any of his Creatures; yet as he is pleased to effect his Purposes, by their instrumentality; he permits *that* to be acknowledged, provided there be a due Distinction preserved between his Agency and theirs. Wise and able Statesmen and brave and successful Commanders, should have their due share of Commendation and Praise from a grateful People, whom they have faithfully and successfully served. Let then the Names of those illustrious Heroes, who have contributed to the Triumphs of this Day, live for ever. Let them be recorded in Golden Characters, in the Annals of Fame; and when the numerous, the unexpected, the astonishing Successes, and Victories which distinguish this glorious Æra are mentioned in future Times, let the wise conduct and intrepid Spirit of those truly British Worthies be remembered with the Applause they deserve. It were ungrateful, it were unjust, to permit such distinguished Services to pass into oblivion; to suffer men, who have deserved so highly of their Country, who have quitted the Endearments of domestic Life, and exchanged them for the Perils of the Camp or the Sea, who have sacrificed their

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own ease and safety to the Hazards and Hardships, which attend such daring and arduous Enterprizes; I say, it were base and disingenuous to the last Degree, to suffer such great and respectable Names to lie buried in equal Silence or Obscurity with theirs that have insinuated or obtruded themselves into Places or Stations to which they were unequal, or have accepted Commissions which they had neither Inclination nor Ability to execute. But I forbear—The just, though extraordinary Honours paid to the Memory of that youthful Hero, who so nobly fell before the Walls of Quebec, and conquered in his fall, are a recent demonstration that Britain is not insensible, nor ungrateful to the Merits of those who greatly dare, or freely bleed, or die, in her Cause.

2. We are to ascribe all Victory to God, in order to secure his Honour as the first Cause, and principal, though invisible, Agent.

It must be acknowledged to be difficult, while we are struck with Admiration at the great Qualities, or signal Exploits and Achievements of our fellow Men, to preserve a becoming Sense of the Divine Presence and Agency. Our regard to an Arm of Flesh is very apt to make us forget or overlook the Arm of the Almighty. David, though a
mighty

mighty and successful Warrior, celebrated as he was for his great martial Endowments, readily acknowledged, *it is God that avengeth me and subdueth the People under me* *.

In some Cases we can hardly avoid seeing and acknowledging the Hand of God; namely, when Success follows the Use of unlikely and inadequate Means, when great Effects are produced by weak and feeble Causes, when Events of the greatest Consequence take their rise from trifling and inconsiderable Incidents, and when the most decisive and important Victories are gained by a handful of Men, over vastly superior Numbers; I say, in such Cases, Success must necessarily and unavoidably be imputed to the powerful and invisible Agency of some superior Being, and we find ourselves constrained, in a Transport of grateful Admiration, to cry out, *Surely this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes* †. Nor indeed is it less so, when our Measures are most wisely and judiciously concerted, when the Persons employed in carrying them into Execution, are most eminently qualified for the Trust reposed in them;

* Jerem. xviii. 47. † Matt. xxi. 42.]

Success is still ultimately no less to be ascribed to God, than when it appears to be most casual and contingent. For he gives his Creatures all their Powers of Council or Action, he guides and directs all their Motions, he animates and arms them with Intrepidity, or sinks and dispirits them at his Pleasure, and he has them so entirely under his command and controul, that they cannot move or act without his Permission, nor prosper without his Blessing. The Royal Virtues of our excellent and venerable Sovereign, the Penetration and Steadiness of that great Man, who is at the Head of his Councils, and the Conduct and Courage of that heroic Commander, who fell in the Enterprize against Quebec, and of his gallant Associates, and of many other of our Officers and Commanders both by Sea and Land; whence were they derived, but from God? and to whom are they to be ascribed, but to him? *Blessed be the Name of God for ever and ever, saith the Prophet Daniel, for wisdom and might are his, and he changeth the Times and the Seasons, he removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings, he giveth Wisdom to the Wise and Knowledge to them that know Understanding; he revealeth the deep and secret Things, he knows what is in the Darknes, and*
the

the Light dwells with him *. Let not therefore, (saith the Prophet *Jeremiah*) let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom, neither let the mighty Man glory in his might; let not the rich Man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord who exercise Lovingkindness, Judgment, and Righteousness in the Earth; for in these Things I delight †.

3. We should count it our duty, and take a Delight in ascribing our Success to Divine Providence, because it endears and sweetens our Victories to consider them as proceeding from God, and as being an eminent and signal Display of Divine Favour.

A Declaration of War is a Kind of Appeal to God, no earthly Tribunal being able to adjust or determine the Quarrels of contending Kings and Nations. When the Sword is therefore drawn, the Decision is referred to the Supreme Monarch of the World, and it is his Power which either succeeds, or blasts, the best concerted and best conducted Enterprises of Men. I do not say that Success is a sure Proof of the Goodness of any Cause;

* Dan. ii. 20,—22. † Jerem. ix. 23, 24.

though I do say, if a Nation undertake a War from a Thirst of Universal Monarchy, to defend or maintain their unjust Encroachments on the Territories of other Nations, in Defiance of Solemn Treaties, or wantonly and unprovoked to disturb and distress their Neighbours, there is no Reason to expect the Blessing of God upon the Arms of such a People; nor would their Success, should it for the Sins of other Nations be permitted, in the Issue prove a Blessing to them, but a Curse. However, the Charge of ambitious Views, and of making Encroachments on the Rights and Possessions of neighbouring Nations, and of Treachery and Cruelty in the Prosecution of their unjust Designs, we presume, and I think very justly, are to be laid at our Enemies Door; so that we seem warranted to say with the Psalmist, *By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine Enemy doth not triumph over me* *.

Success and Victory are always grateful in themselves; but when we consider them as flowing from the Hand of God, when those peculiar Circumstances attend them, which point to the Right Hand of the Lord, visibly exerted; when his Arm does wondrous Things, when the Light of his Countenance throws a Lustre upon the

* Psal. xli. 11.

Field of Conquest, when the Interpositions of Providence are manifest, and when they are decisive, they are peculiarly acceptable and grateful.

In this view, with what Pleasure do we walk over the Plains of Minden? where a few Regiments of British Infantry, unsupported, shamefully unsupported by the Cavalry of their own Nation, and notwithstanding the vast Superiority of the Enemy, so gloriously triumph'd: A Victory, which was as seasonable as it was important, and which saved the Countries of Hesse and Hanover from being made a Desert by the Enemy, on Account of the War in which our Sovereign was engaged with France as King of Great Britain. In this view we recollect with Gratitude and Admiration, the critical Capitulation of Guadalupe; when, had it been delayed even a few Hours longer, the large Reinforcement which was actually landed, would have rendered the Conquest extremely difficult, if not impracticable. With equal surprize and thankfulness we received Advice of the seasonable Surrender of Quebec, when Difficulties unforeseen, and apparently unsurmountable, seemed to have rendered the Enterprize dubious, if not desperate; when the last noble Effort appears

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to have been made, rather in Obedience to the Call of Duty, than with any very sanguine Expectations of Success, when the advanced Season of the Year pressed hard upon our Fleet, to retire from a River which was beginning to grow rough and rapid, and where they were in danger of being locked up by the setting in of the Ice, or destroyed by tempestuous Weather. It really enhances the Pleasure arising from our Conquests, to regard them as Divine Gifts; we hold them as it were by a firmer Tenure; we call them ours with greater Confidence than we should otherwise do. Whereas those who disbelieve a Providence, can take no Consolation of this kind from their Success; because the same Chance that has been favourable To-day, may be unfavourable To-morrow. But God is faithful and immutable, and his Affections to his chosen People are steady and invariable: So that if we secure him on our Side, by a right Improvement of his past Mercies, we may apply to ourselves these words, which were spoken to the Children of Israel, *The Lord did not set his Love upon you, because ye were more in number than any People; but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the Oath which he had sworn unto your*

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*your Fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty Hand, and redeemed you out of the House of Bondmen, from the Hand of Pharaoh, King of Ægypt *. And the Favour of God, not only endears, but secures our Success and our Acquisitions. As it is said, The Fear of the Lord was on all the Kings of those Countries, when they heard how the Lord fought against the Enemies of Israel; so the Realm of Jehosaphat was quiet; for his God gave him rest round about †.*

II. I am to shew how the divine Wisdom, Power and Mercy, are peculiarly and signally displayed herein.

All the Works of God, in all Places of his Dominions ‡, praise him; even in the common and stated Course of Nature and Providence are clearly seen his Eternal Power and Godhead §. But sometimes the All-glorious Jehovah exerts as it were, (I speak it with the lowliest Reverence) his more vigorous Efforts, and the Most Mighty girds his Sword upon his Thigh, with his Glory and his Majesty, and in his Majesty rides prosperously, because of Truth and Meekness, and Righteousness; and his Right Hand teaches him terrible Things ||. At such Seasons there is a more remarkable display,

* Deut. vii. 9. † 2 Chron. ii. 29. ‡ Psal. ciii. 22.
§ Rom. i. 20. || Psal. xlv. 3, 4.

1. Of infinite Wisdom: stiled, in our Text, *The Right Hand of God*; as it was that which directed all the Motions of the Children of Israel, marked out their Camps, regulated their Marches, and pointed out to them the surest Way to Victory and Triumph. *The Wisdom of the World*, (saith the Apostle on a different Occasion, though in Words very applicable to my present Purpose,) *and of the Princes of the World, cometh to nought* *. But thanks be to God we have abundant Testimony of this in our late Experience: For who but he, whose all-penetrating Eye not only pierces the Cabinets of Princes, but who *searcheth the Hearts and trieth the Reins* † of the Children of Men, and *understandeth their Thoughts afar off* §, could have unveiled the deep-laid Designs of the crafty, and disconcerted the Combination of the Mighty, against our magnanimous Protestant Ally? Who but he, who is *wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in working* ‡, could have enabled him to find Resources and Expedients for maintaining his ground thus long, against the united Efforts of the most formidable

* 1 Cor. ii. 6. † Jerem. xvii. 10. § Psal. cxxxix. 2.
‡ Isaiah xxviii. 29.

Powers of Europe. And to come nearer home, who but *the Father of Lights*, hath directed our Publick Councils, hath suggested such prudent and vigorous Measures as have suddenly changed our Prospects, awakened us from our Supineness and Timidity, roused the British Spirit, and united all Parties, with a Zeal unknown and unexampled, (at least in later Ages) in Support of the Honour and Interest of their Country? To him we owe it, that the Councils of France have lost their boasted Consistence, that one unsuccessful Prime Minister resigns his Place to another, and that every new Administration is signalized by some new Disappointment; that the Design of an Invasion of these Kingdoms, which has been so long forming, is not yet ripe for Execution; that they have not been able to secure their own Coasts from frequent Insults, and almost perpetual Alarms; that their Finances are so low, as that they are reduced to the most desperate and disgraceful Methods to supply their present pressing Necessities, and that in the emphatical Language of Scripture, *they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken Man, and are at their Wits end* *; I say it is

* Psal. cvii. 27.

evidently owing, and we most thankfully ascribe it, to *his* presiding in *our* Councils, and withdrawalment from theirs, *who is wise in Heart, and mighty in Strength**, and *whose Understanding is infinite* †.

2. There is a Display of Almighty Power : intimated in our Text, by the *Arm of the Lord*.

It is true, God does not ordinarily act in such an immediate and miraculous Manner, as when the Walls of Jericho fell down at the Sound of Trumpets of Rams Horns, by an invisible Divine Agency ; and the numerous Host of the Assyrians was destroyed by an Angel in one Night. However, when God uses visible and ordinary Means to accomplish his Purposes, his Power is as really exerted as if the Effect were produced by the direct and immediate Agency of his irresistible Arm. The Hand that is now victorious, had been equally weak and feeble, with *the withered Arm of Jeroboam* §, if it had not been strengthened from on high. To what, but the Arm of the Lord, are we to ascribe such Prodigies of Valour as were performed at the Siege of Louif-

* Job ix. 4.
xiii. 4.

† Psal. cxlvii. 5.

§ 1 Kings

bourg; when our Soldiers and Sailors made good their Landing, on a Shore which was little less than one continued Battery, and destroyed and brought off the capital Ships of the Enemy from under the very Walls of the Town? What but the out - stretched Arm of Omnipotence could have animated and enabled our Troops in the Attempt on Quebec, first to climb a Precipice (which indeed the Enemy, deeming it impracticable, had left unguarded) and then with only Five Thousand to meet an exasperated Enemy coming against them with considerably more than Ten Thousand, and give them so surprizing and compleat an Overthrow? The Power of God, in all the Instances I have mentioned, is visible to every discerning Eye; and it would be ungrateful and insolent in us to say, " Mine " own arm hath gotten me this Victory." No, it was *the Arm of the Lord that brought Salvation* *; *through him it was that we did valiantly*; *it was He that trod down our Enemies* †, and *caused one to chase a Thousand, and two to put Ten Thousand to Flight* §. *The Heavens therefore shall praise thy wonders, O Lord, thy Faithfulness also in the Congregation of the Saints;*

* Isaiah lix. 16.
xxxii. 30.

† Psal. lx. 12.

§ Deut.

for who in the Heavens can be compared unto the Lord? and who among the Sons of the Mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy Faithfulness round about thee? But*

3. He has magnified his *Mercy* above all his Name.

If God had not *had a Favour* unto the Children of Israel (according to the Expression in our Text) and *lifted up the Light of his Countenance upon them*, neither his *Arm* nor his *Right Hand*, neither his Power nor his Wisdom, had ever appeared for them. Now there are two Circumstances which signalize Mercy, and render the Goodness of the Lord more conspicuous and affecting.—And the first is,

1. When the Persons on whom it is conferred are every way unworthy of it.

When he might justly have rejected Israel for their Sins, when he might have cast them away from his Presence, and suffered those that hated them to rule over them, that he should then give them the Necks of their Enemies; and when he might have cut off the very Remembrance of such an ungrateful and

* Psa. lxxxix. 5, 6, 8.

rebellious People from the Earth, that he
 should then crown their Enterprizes with Suc-
 cess, and enlarge their Dominions; and when
 he might have executed all his Wrath, and
 made their Plagues wonderful, that he
 should then not only spare, but bless them;
 is such a Triumph of Mercy, as he will have
 all his People observe and acknowledge. Very
 remarkable is the Earnestness with which
 God elsewhere presses this upon the Chil-
 dren of Israel, *Speak not thou in thy
 Heart, that the Lord thy God hath cast them
 out from before thee, saying, For my Righteous-
 ness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this
 Land; but for the Wickedness of these Nations,
 the Lord doth drive them out from before thee;
 not for thy Righteousness, nor for the Upright-
 ness of thy Heart, dost thou go to possess their
 Land; but for the Wickedness of these Nations
 the Lord thy God doth drive them out from be-
 fore thee; that he may perform the Word which
 he swore unto thy Fathers, Abraham, Isaac,
 and Jacob: Understand therefore that the
 Lord thy God giveth thee not this good Land
 to possess it for thy Righteousness, for thou art a
 stiff-necked People **.

It is not impossible that we may be so vain
 and arrogant as to sacrifice to our own Net, and

* Deut ix. 4, 5, 6.

burn Incense to our own Drag *; to imagine that our extraordinary Success is the Reward of our extraordinary Piety, and that it is because we have more Religion and Virtue than the Rest of the World, that we have been so greatly and signally prospered. If indeed we sink into a Forgetfulness what manner of Persons we are, we may thus imagine; but if we examine into the moral and religious State of the Nation, if we enquire where any considerable Numbers (in Proportion to the Bulk of the People) who are eminent for true Godliness, for Piety and Purity, and for the Profession and Practice of pure and uncorrupted Christianity, reside, whether in the City or the Country, we have reason to blush at our hasty and mistaken Computation, and to confess that we are preserved from general Desolation, as Sodom and Gomorrah might have been, by some few righteous Persons found among us. For did ever Iniquity abound more? Was the Love of professing Christians ever more cold and frozen? Was the Name of the Lord our God ever more commonly blasphemed? Did ever profane Swearing and Cursing more abound in our Navy and Army? Was ever

* Habakuk i. 16.

the Lord's Day more loosely observed, I should rather say, more daringly profaned, by Persons of all Ranks and Conditions? Was ever the Spirit of God more highly provoked to withdraw? Was ever the Son of God more shamefully——But I ought not to make this a Day of Reproach which is devoted to Congratulation and Joy. Surely we had little Reason to expect that God should have been on our Side, or should have fought for us against our Enemies, after we had abused so many almost miraculous Deliverances in Time past, and when our Abominations might have been a sufficient Provocation to him, not only not to assist us, but to assist our Enemies. However, from the extraordinary Nature and Number of our Successes, we have Reason to hope that he is still among us, that notwithstanding all our Backslidings he regards us as his People, and that he is trying if by his *Goodness* he may even yet lead us to Repentance; and at the same Time that he rekindles our Gratitude and Love, he encourages our Trust and Confidence and Joy, so that if we do not by our Perverseness forfeit his returning Favour, we may smile at the Threatnings of our Enemies, we may *laugh at the Shaking of their*

their Spear *, and even now that their Fleet is failed, and they have exhausted all their Strength to make one desperate Effort, we may notwithstanding rejoice in hope, that *God, even our own God, will bless us* (A).

2. The Mercy of God is signally displayed, when the Consequences of a Victory are highly advantageous.

The Honour accruing from Victory is pleasing and grateful; but when it is attended with lasting Benefits, and valuable Acquisitions to a Nation, as the Mercy is greater so it is more acceptable and grateful still. And thus it undoubtedly was, when in the Instance before us, the victorious Israelites had their Enemies *Lands, and Cities, and Vineyards given them for an Heritage* †. Victories are sometimes dear bought, and the Advantages accruing from them will not compensate for the Blood and Treasure expended in obtaining them. A great General once said, when he was congratulated on his Success in a very obstinate and bloody Engagement, “Such another Victory would ruin me.” — But when in Consequence of our Success, our Do-

* Job xli. 29. † Josh. xxiv. 13.

(A) The Advice of the Defeat of the Brest Fleet by Sir Edward Hawke, did not arrive till after the Day of Publick Thanksgiving, on which this Sermon was preached. And in this God *did bless us* according to our hopes.

minions

minions are like to be enlarged, our riches increased, our Trade improved, and our Enemies are greatly weakened and distressed; it is a proportionably convincing Argument, that herein God *had a favour unto us*. I own myself not enough versed in mercantile Affairs, to determine how many profitable Branches of Trade will be opened in Africa, by the Conquest of Senegal and Goree; what greater Quantities of Sugar, Coffee, Cotton, and Indigo, will be imported by our being in Possession of Marygalante and Guadelupe; how greatly our Fishery will be enlarged and secured by the Acquisition of Cape Breton and the Isle of St. John's; and above all, what an almost universal Trade will be opened by the Reduction of Canada.—So far we all know, they were the principal Sources from whence our Enemies derived their Wealth and Power, and should Providence continue them in our Possession, and give us Wisdom to improve them, we may expect to find them of more real Service to this Nation than all the Gold Mines of Mexico or Peru.

But the happiest Consequence of all would be, the Opportunity it might open to us, of introducing the Gospel amongst the Indian Nations; which it is hoped, should we extend our Territories on the Continent of America,

and be settled in the peaceable Possession of them, our Governors will readily and seriously encourage. Human policy suggests it, and Christian Benevolence strongly recommends it. Nothing will more familiarize and endear their Conquerors, nothing will more attach them to our Interest, nothing will more effectually annex them to our Crown, and be a firmer Tye upon their Allegiance, than Gratitude for the Gospel. Who can help anticipating the joyous (and God grant it may not be a far distant) Time, when amongst other valuable Exports from this Country to our Colonies, there shall be a large Demand for the BIBLE? When the *Word of the Lord shall have free Course, and run and be glorified**; when God shall give his Son *the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for his Possession†*; when Converts shall *fly as a Cloud, and as Doves to their Windows‡*, and a Nation shall be born in a Day§. In this View, we may be allowed to rejoice in beholding new Towns, new Forts, new Harbours, and new Islands, added to our Territories in America and the West-Indies; and

* 2 Thessal. iii. 1.
§ Isaiah lxvi. 8.

† Psal. ii. 8.

‡ Isaiah lx. 8.

to triumph in Quebec, as a Key to a new World, and as giving us the most encouraging Prospect of extending both Commerce and Christianity.—What I have suggested I would be understood to speak with the utmost Modesty and Caution, sensible, whether the future Events of this War shall be prosperous or adverse is entirely in the Hand of Providence; and confiding in the Wisdom of our Governors, that Peace (whenever we are favoured with so desirable a Blessing) will be concluded on the best Terms, which our Circumstances will admit, for the Security and Welfare of these Nations, and of our Colonies, for the firmer Establishment and Support of the Protestant Interest in Europe, and for rendering our Tranquility both honourable and durable.

Great and signal, Britons and Fellow-Protestants, is the Glory and Importance of the Conquests I have been just enumerating; and they demand our warmest Gratitude and Thankfulness to Almighty God. But I must remind you of one Victory which I have not yet named, and which it becomes us this Day to celebrate: A Victory, which, whether we consider the Nature of the Conflict, the Power of the Adversary, the Dignity of the Conqueror, or the glorious Fruits and Effects of

his Conquests, greatly exceeds the boasted Triumphs of this memorable Year. I am not commissioned to inform you, that our glorious Ally, the King of Prussia, hath totally defeated the Austrian Armies, or that our Enemies are driven out of their Settlements in the East-Indies, or that their Fleets and Armaments, prepared at a vast Expence, for invading us, are destroyed or dispersed.—No; I am this Day * to remind you of an infinitely superior and more important Victory than any of these would have been, I mean, the Triumph of our Redeemer over Sin and Satan, over Death and Hell, who were leagued and combined against us, by whom this World was enslaved, and by whom it would have been ruined and destroyed, *if the Spirit of the Lord God had not come upon this Great Captain of our Salvation, had not anointed him to preach good Tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken in heart, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort them that mourn, to give unto*

* The Day when this Sermon was preached was, in Course, the Day of Preparation for the Sacrament, which was to be administered the ensuing Lord's Day.

them that mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness *. The Fruits of his Victory, which we already enjoy, are numerous and important. Hereby being released from a worse than Ægyptian Bondage, and delivered from a Darkness that might be felt, we are translated in the *Marvellous Light* of the Gospel, and into the glorious *Liberty of the Sons of God*. We are admitted to Terms of Peace and Reconciliation with the great Monarch of the Universe, whose Favour we had forfeited by our unnatural Alliances, and by our unprovoked and obstinate Rebellion. Hereby a Free Port (if I may be allowed the Expression) is opened in Heaven; where every humble and truly contrite Soul may purchase the invaluable Blessings of Pardon and Peace, Patience and Fortitude, and in short whatever, in a Foreign Country, and in a State of Indigence, it can be supposed to want, or can reasonably desire. Hereby *are no longer Strangers and Foreigners, but we become Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God* †; hereby we have the *Privilege of becoming the Sons of God; and if*

* Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, 3. † Eph. ii. 29.

Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ *; and we have received the Earnest of our future Inheritance. Our FAITH and HOPE, whom we sent to spy out the promised Land, are returned laden with the Clusters of *Eschol*; and they assure us, that it is a goodly Land, a Land flowing with Milk and Honey †, and replete with Blessings *which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive* ‡: they assure us, that there is *no Night there*, and yet that the Sun doth not scorch by Day; that there is no Winter there, and yet no Draught arises from an Eternal Summer; that there is *the River of Life, the Water of Life*, and on either Side of the River grows *the Tree of Life, which bears twelve Manner of Fruits, and yields her Fruit every Month; and the Leaves of the Tree are for the healing of the Nations* §; that the Inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick; Sighing and Sorrow shall flee away, and the Voice of Weeping, Lamentation, and bitter Mourning shall be heard no more; that the City hath Walls, and Towers, and Bulwarks, so strong and lofty, that there no Ene-

* John i. 12. Gal. iv. 7. † Numb. xiv. 7, 8.

‡ 1 Cor. ii. 9. § Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

my can surprize or alarm ; that the Land is a Land of perfect Harmony, where reigns universal and everlasting Peace, where Nation shall not rise up against Nation any more, nor Kingdom against Kingdom ; where the Bitterness of Parties, and the Noise of War, shall be known no more for ever ; that *the City hath no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon, for the Glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof ; and the Nations of them that are saved walk in the Light of it, and the Kings of the Earth bring their Glory and Honour unto it, and the Gates of it are not shut at all by Day, (for there is no Night there ;) and they bring the Glory and Honour of all Nations into it ; and there in no wise enters into it any Thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lye ; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life **. This is the magnificent Account which the Sacred Records have given us of the heavenly Canaan, obtained and secured by Victory of the Captain of our Salvation, over Death and Hell, for all who fight under his Banner, and are faithful unto Death. And our Lord, and Head, and Leader hath already taken Possession in our

* Rev. xxi. 23.

Name;

Name ; and not all the Powers of Earth or Hell can deprive those who are faithful Soldiers of Jesus Christ, of the everlasting Enjoyment of their promised Inheritance. And shall we, my Fellow Christians, shall we imagine that we can never sufficiently celebrate the Memory of those to whose Bravery we are, under God, indebted for our temporal Successes? and are no Honours due to the Name and Memory of our all-conquering Saviour, for an everlasting Triumph, for the Acquisition of an incorruptible Inheritance? Shall costly and expensive Monuments be erected to eternize some bold and intrepid Enterprize of a Fellow-Worm? And when we are required to record the Memory of the great Captain of our Salvation, in an Ordinance of his own Appointment, by eating Bread and drinking Wine, in remembrance of him; Shall we pray to be excused from this easy and inexpensive Service, as if some difficult and dangerous Atchievement, or some costly and burdensome Service were required of us? Shall we despise the glorious Privileges he offers, the least of which was bought with his Blood; and shall we refuse to *follow him through the Gates into the City*; notwithstanding he hazarded, notwithstanding he sacrificed his own Life, to

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break down the separating Wall, and to open a Passage for us, and to introduce us into the Joys and Glories of his heavenly Kingdom? Where is our boasted Honour? Where is our Public Spirit? Where is our Gratitude? Where, alas! is our Humanity? Dare we pretend to pay a Tribute of Gratitude to the Heroes of this Day, and not one Tongue move in the Praise, not one Trophy erected to the Honour of him to whom we are infinitely indebted? who espoused our Cause in the last Extremity, and where our immortal Interest was depending? who *was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities* *; who *trod the Wine-Press of his Father's Wrath alone, and of the People there was none with him* †; who was betrayed into the Hands of his Enemies by one of his Disciples, and forsaken by all the rest; who persevered notwithstanding in his generous Undertaking, bore up with divine and unshaken Fortitude under Indignities and Tortures innumerable; maintained the Fight even after his Body streamed with Blood; and at last, ~~he was crucified for us, and died for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.~~

* Isaiah liii. 5.

† Isaiah lxiii. 3.

cried, with a loud Voice, *It is finished* *. Thus He triumph'd when he fell; by dying *He destroyed Death, and him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil* †; and with his last Breath he proclaimed the joyful Victory. I say, shall those who fight our Battles on Earth meet with more regard than the Captain of our Salvation? Shall our petty Conquests in these Lower Regions, give us more delight than the Promise of the heavenly Glory? Shall *the Children of this World* be always *wisfer in their Generation*, and more grateful, *than the Children of Light* §? I beseech you, permit me to be a successful Advocate for our divine, but much-injured, Benefactor. Our political Prospects are undoubtedly bright and glorious; and the Names of those brave Men, who, under God, were the Means of rendering them so, are deservedly dear to us; such repeated and important Successes loudly demanded a Day of Publick Thanksgiving; and we should esteem it a great Mercy, that the whole Nation is so unanimously disposed to celebrate the Anniversary of this glorious Year to the Honour of God Almighty and the good of our

* John xix. 30.

† Heb. ii. 14.

§ Luke xvi. 8.

united Acknowledgments to the Lord of Hosts. Let this Day, devoted to the Commemoration of them, be witness to every innocent and decent Expression of our Joy. But let not all our Gratitude be exhausted on this Occasion; let us remember, that, as Christians, we have a higher and a nobler Call for it. The ensuing Lord's Day will give us an Opportunity of exerting it. When therefore Jesus Christ *is evidently set forth as crucified before our Eyes* *, let our Eye affect our Hearts; and with the Emblems of his mangled Body in our Hands, and with our Souls transported at the unspeakable Advantages arising from his Death, let us resolve and actually begin to erect a Monument in every Heart, sacred to the immortal Memory of Jesus. Let us every Day add one Stone at least to the Spiritual Building; and, at last, when it is got high above the Clouds, and the Top-Stone is laid in Glory, let us shout, GRACE, GRACE unto it †; and by the same impressive Finger, which wrote the two Tables of Stone, let this Inscription be engraven,

Worthy is the LAMB that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and

* Gal. iii. 1. † Zech. iv. 7.

Strength,

Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing; for he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and hath made us to our God Kings and Priests : To whom be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

* Rev. v. 9, 10, 12.

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